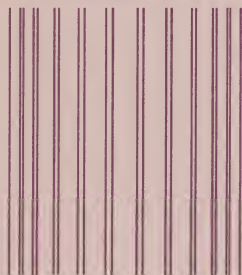




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Photography by Martin Messik

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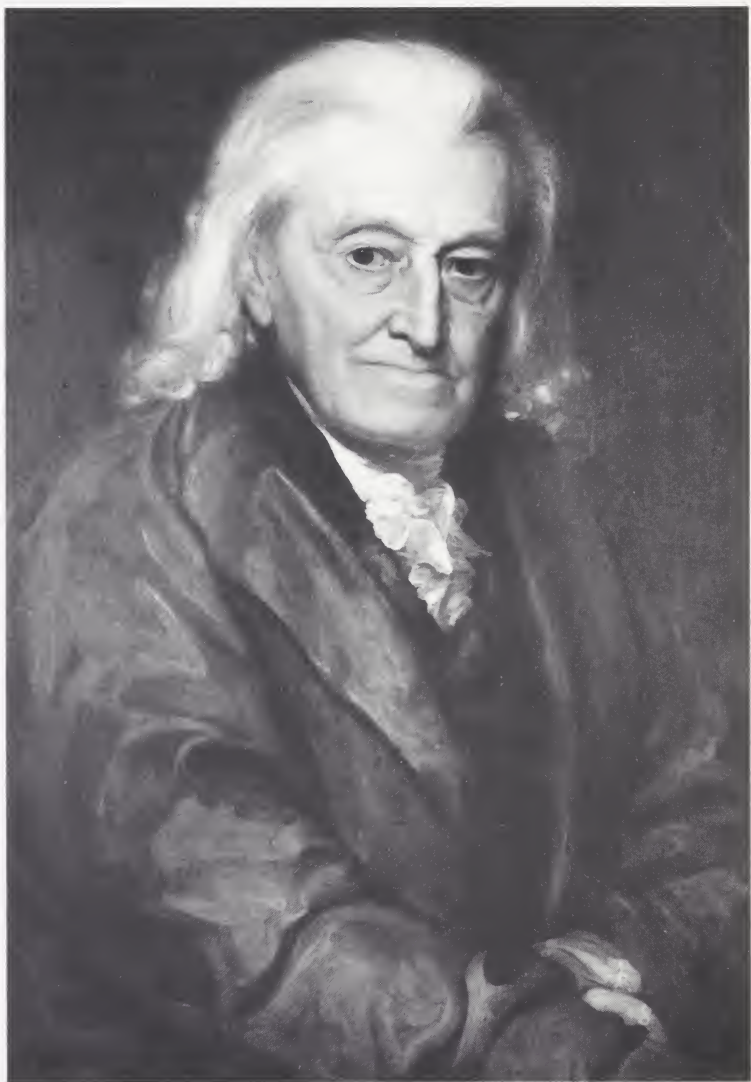
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William Samuel Johnson, lawyer and first president of Columbia College, painted by John Wesley Jarvis in 1814.

When Johnson Spoke, Others Listened

RUDOLPH ELLENBOGEN

Columbia College's first president, William Samuel Johnson, was recalled by a contemporary as "the *tout ensemble* of a perfect man, in face, form, and proportion; his stature was above the middle height, say above five feet ten, his eye was dark, and beaming with intelligence, his features regular, and the whole expression of his face, that of benevolence and dignity; his complexion was clear; the hue healthful, not delicate, not robust, but between both; his hair was black with some intermixture of grey, and inclined to curl; his dress of black cut silk velvet . . ." To this flattering description must be added that he was one of America's outstanding orators of his time. He also played a role in events, bicentennials of which we are celebrating this year: he was a member of the Constitutional Convention, affixing his signature to that document on September 17, 1787; and he was installed on November 12, 1787, to the presidency of the oldest institution of higher learning in New York.

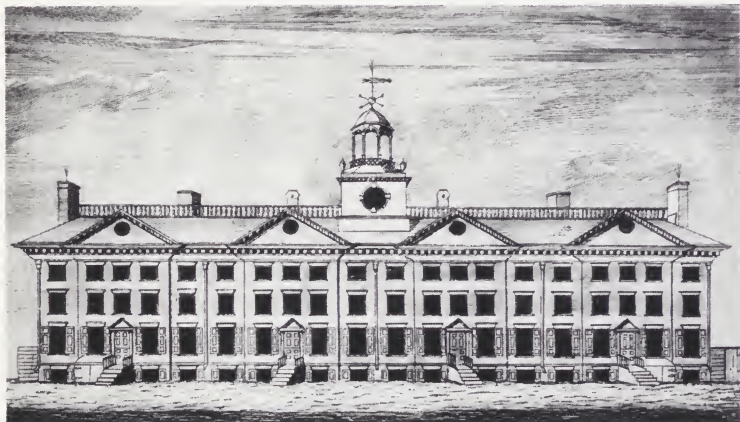
Johnson was a great man in a time of great men, and he was recognized by his peers. William Pierce, the delegate to the Constitutional Convention from Georgia, who wrote character sketches of all the delegates, noted that "Dr. Johnson is a character much celebrated for his legal knowledge; he is said to be one of the first classics [classicists] in America, and certainly possesses a very strong and enlightened understanding. . . . He was once employed as an Agent for the State of Connecticut to state her claims to certain landed territory before the British House of Commons; this Office he discharged with so much dignity, and made such an ingenious display of his powers, that he laid the foundation of a reputation which will probably last much longer than his own life." James Madison, who was on the Committee of Style which drafted the final version of the Constitution (and of which Johnson was the

chairman), expressed in 1816 that "I have always felt a large share of the respect acknowledged by all to be due to his [Johnson's] endowments and virtues. . . ." Just a few years earlier, on January 9, 1812, Johnson made a rare appearance in Fairfield while the Superior Court was sitting. Two newspapers, the *Connecticut Mirror* and the *Connecticut Courant*, reported the event: "The presence of this venerable and celebrated Counsellour, who has often been styled *the father of the Bar of Connecticut*, and who has probably not appeared in a Court of Justice for nearly 27 years before, attracted the attention of all who were present." On the adjournment, the lawyers present held a meeting and appointed a committee which presented a formal written address to him expressing their "high veneration" for his "professional and private character" in which they said he "has ever been considered the brightest ornament of the Connecticut Bar." Even English lexicographer Samuel Johnson, well known for his anti-American feelings, wrote on March 4, 1773, to the Connecticut-born William Samuel Johnson, "there is scarce any man whose acquaintance I have more desired to cultivate than yours. . . ."

The foundation of Johnson's great learning commenced early; at four he started on the primer, and at five he read a *Psalter* and *Catechism*; by eight he had read Aesop and Virgil in translation and was ready to start Latin; the study of Greek began at ten; and he entered Yale at thirteen, where he did not have much to do, his classmates being so far behind him. He continued to read extensively throughout his life in law, religion, history, science, and belles-lettres. Johnson was, however, not ostentatious in his display of learning, and he was, as William Pierce tells us, the type of man who "possesses the manners of a Gentleman, and engages the Hearts of Men by the sweetness of his temper, and that affectionate style of address with which he accosts his acquaintance."

After graduating from Yale, Johnson spent a short time as a lay reader and catechist, but was determined to seek a career in law and public life. His success was a result of the positive qualities men-

tioned above, a pacificatory nature, and a fine political sense. Johnson's career included representing Connecticut at the Stamp Act Congress, the Continental Congress, and the Constitutional Convention, as well as serving in the Connecticut House of Repre-



Columbia College on Murray Street as it appeared in 1790 during Johnson's presidency.

sentatives, the upper house of the Connecticut Legislature, and on the Governor's council.

Founded in 1754, King's College, rechartered and renamed Columbia in 1784, had had two presidents: the first, from 1754 to 1763, Samuel Johnson, William Samuel's father, and Myles Cooper, the second, from 1763 to 1775, an intemperate loyalist. In 1787, the charter of Columbia was again altered, and the trustees appointed Johnson as its president. Johnson's discreet and conciliatory behavior in matters of religion, his reputation as a scholar, his character as a gentleman, his role in the formation of the new government, and the prestige he would bring to the College made him a logical choice among the trustees. Once at Columbia, his widespread reputation as a man of integrity induced many fathers

of students to request the president to personally watch over their sons. Johnson taught, at one time or another, logic, moral philosophy, and rhetoric and belles-lettres; and he was an effective teacher, fondly remembered by his students, and able to help guide the small college peacefully during a period when others like Princeton, Yale, and Union were under bitter attack from the press and student rebellion.

Johnson was fond of little children also, especially those eager to learn; and when he was an old man, the children of his village gathered around him as if he were their companion. We know of his happiness at the birth of each new grandchild, and of his teaching his little grandson William to do his sums by candlelight at six in the morning and reading aloud with him before school, at noon, and in the evening.

As a lawyer, legislator, and public figure, Johnson's career was furthered by his abilities as an orator. In his obituary in the *Christian Journal and Literary Register* (December 1819), Johnson was recalled as "gifted with every external grace of the orator, a voice of the finest and richest tones, copious and flowing elocution, and a mind stored with elegant literature. . . ." He, the obituary continues, "appeared at the bar with a fascination of language and manner, which those who heard him had never even conceived it possible to unite with the technical address of an advocate."

William Pierce held a minority opinion about Johnson's speaking abilities. He wrote, "As an Orator in my opinion there is nothing in him that warrants the high reputations which he has for public speaking. There is something in the tone of his voice not pleasing to the Ear,—but he is eloquent and clear,—always abounding with information and instruction." Others, however, felt differently, and his ability was remarked upon even while he was still a young man. In 1747 he presented a Latin oration for his Master of Arts degree at Yale which was considered by Noah Welles, Congregational minister and former Dean's scholar at Yale, as the best ever delivered. The following year, the notable New York law partner of

William Livingston and former classmate at Yale, William Smith, Jr., wrote that eloquence was Johnson's "field," his "province," and his "Instrument"; Johnson was not yet twenty-three at the time. Eleven years later, another friend, Jared Ingersoll, who was acting as the London agent for the Connecticut government and who had heard the best English orators, wrote of Johnson that he could "Speak as *well as any* of Em." Wilkins Updike, in his *Memoirs of the Rhode-Island Bar*, quotes Senator Asher Robbins, who remembered Johnson in these words:

I think that he was the most perfect orator I ever listened to, and I have heard most of the celebrated speakers of my time. In style and manner, if not in matter, he was strikingly superior to them all. In elocution, [in which I include articulation and intonation,] he was perfect. And his voice, though sonorous, was soft, and fell upon the ear like music. His delivery was deliberate, yet animated; not slow nor rapid, but in a medium between both. His current and the current of the mind of the hearer kept pace with each other, and neither out-stripped the other. But his great perfection was his style; his sentences, though apparently prompt and unpremeditated, were all in the classical cast, which no meditation could improve, either in the choice or the collection of words. Long exercise had made this prompt and classical expression of his ideas habitual to him. His attitude and motions were full of dignity and grace, and his gestures, though not abundant, were always significant.

Abraham Jarvis, second bishop of Connecticut, who had studied for the ministry with Samuel Johnson, told his son, Samuel Farmar Jarvis, that he was present at a trial in which Johnson participated. He recalled, "the court was crowded to suffocation," yet "the attention of the whole assembly was so enchained that . . . 'you might hear a pin drop'"; and E. Edwards Beardsley in his *Life and Times of William Samuel Johnson, LL.D.* recounts an occurrence at the hearing in 1782 in Trenton on the Susquehanna case, a long-standing land dispute between Pennsylvania and Connecticut,

. . . the opposing counsel, in the course of his argument, had read some ancient writing, recorded on a long roll of parchment, which was strangely interlarded with passages of Scripture, and with

which he made the Commissioners merry and jocose by denominating them puritanical fantasy. . . . Johnson rose to reply . . . and feeling the sting of the reflection upon his native State conveyed in the words puritanical fantasy, he seized the parchment, and reading with his silvery voice and in a tone of marked solemnity the same passages, he infused an awe into the whole audience; and then suddenly dropping it, and lifting his hands and eyes to heaven, he exclaimed, "Great God! is all this fantasy!" That moment the parchment, dismissed from his hands, rolled as by a spontaneous impulse to his feet; a chill went over the Assembly so perceptible that the narrator declared he could not, at the distance of twenty years, repeat the anecdote without experiencing the same sensation.

This dramatic performance is, no doubt, a reflection of the depth and sincerity of Johnson's religious beliefs as well as a demonstration of his immense love of theater.

Among a group of letters by William Samuel Johnson, written primarily to his son Robert Charles Johnson, presented recently by Mrs. Robert D. Muir, is one in which the elder Johnson sends his son advice on orating. It is of particular interest because of the elder's stature as an orator, and is a fine example of his style as an essayist. From it we may also glean something of the man and something of the teacher. The letter about oratory dated April 2, 1786, follows an interchange the course of which begins with Johnson sending on January 8, 1786, advice to the nineteen-year-old who was ill on the means of caring for the young man's health. The son replied on January 16 thanking his father for the "hints for the preservation of my health," and informing him he "will be careful to observe them." "I hope," he adds, "that my particular attention will be an inducement to give me your advice often, and correct me in every deviation from the line of prudence." In his March 31 letter to his father, Charles (as he was called by his father), who had graduated from Yale three years earlier and was pursuing a career in law, writes about speaking about the "Night Law . . . for the first time," about the pleasures of his success, his desire to improve, the difficulties he faces, and his fears that he may be "feeding my vanity and Self-Love . . . or raising in myself self

satisfaction & self-sufficiency, only to make myself an object of ridicule & contempt."

William Samuel Johnson replied on April 2, 1786, in the margin of his son's letter with his advice on oration:

I congratulate you on yr success very heartily. Yesterday I was extremely glad to find you are animated with a laudable ambition to excel in speaking. It is indeed a noble accomplishment! With this disposition you may rely upon it, you will accomplish your wishes if you can only submit to that persevering Industry & attention without which no Man ever excelled in that, or indeed any other signal accomplishment. Remember the infinite Pains Demosthenes & Cicero took with themselves to effect their progress. My Instructions shall not be wanting to the utmost of my ability. Two things are essentially necessary to a speaker—Ideas—& Words—The first are to be attained by constant Study & continually treasuring up in the mind every species of useful science to be ready for use when ask'd for & there is hardly anything in the whole circle of science & in the common affairs of Life that will not at one time or other be found useful to a public speaker, & more especially professional

Johnson wrote to his son Robert Charles on April 2, 1786, giving advice on oration; the father's advice was written in the left margin of the son's letter of March 31. (Muir gift)

I congratulate you on yr success very heartily, & am extremely glad to find you are animated with a laudable ambition to excel in speaking. It is indeed a noble accomplishment! With this disposition, you may rely upon it, you will accomplish your wishes if you can only submit to that persevering Industry & attention without which no Man ever excelled in that, or indeed, any other signal accomplishment. Remember the infinite Pains Demosthenes & Cicero took with themselves to effect their progress. My Instructions shall not be wanting to the utmost of my ability. Two things are essentially necessary to a speaker—Ideas—& Words—The first are to be attained by constant Study, & continually treasuring up in the mind every species of useful science to be ready for use when ask'd for & there is hardly anything in the whole circle of science & in the common affairs of Life that will not at one time or other be found useful to a public speaker, & more especially professional

Knowledge. When the Mind is richly stored with Ideas, it is a just remark that of Horaces that *Words* will flow of cause. But it is not enough to express ourselves *properly* so as barely to convey our Ideas, we wish also to speak eloquently & forceably so as to engage, convince, & captivate the hearers. This is to be attain'd by a careful attention to our Language & the proper choice of words, even in common conversation, & in whatever we write. By studying the whole nature, extent, & Compass of Language. By observing carefully the stile & manner of the best Writers & Speakers, & imitating them, not servilely, but liberally forming ourselves upon the best Models—and by frequent Practice both in speaking & writing—When you are to speak upon any subject, that is then to be particularly study'd, to be examin'd on all sides, & view'd in every light, both for the purpose of argument & ornament, every step you take will render yr. future progress easier, & by Degrees you will be readily prepar'd for every occasion. In this way you cannot fail of success. It is generally true that every *Man is the former of his own Fortunes*, & it is almost inconceivable what Industry & application can effect even with very moderate abilities—God has graciously given you sufficient Genius, do but your part to Cultivate it properly, which I have endeavour'd & shall continue to give you opportunity to do so, as well as hereafter to display it; & I doubt not by God's blessing upon yr. Industry you will be able to make a conspicuous figure in Life, be highly useful to Mankind, as well as to your Friends, to yourself, & inexpressibly rejoice the heart of

Yr most affectionate Father & Friend
Wm Saml. Johnson

Johnson concludes his letter with a note to his son to be wary of both vanity and arrogance as well as bashfulness, mistaken modesty, and indifference which “magnifies every apparent danger & difficulty.”

There is a postscript to this story which is found in Samuel Orcutt's *A History of the Old Town of Stratford*. Charles, we learn, was an able student. In November 1787, the town of Stratford, the Johnsons' home town, had a meeting to discuss ratification of the new United States Constitution. There was a powerful opposition in the town and, unfortunately, William Samuel Johnson was unable to attend, but his son was there. A motion was made that Charles speak in his father's absence since he had been frequently

with his father and was privy to his father's ideas. The motion was laughed at and rejected, causing the young man to have an even greater desire to speak. A certain Major Walker held the youth by the arm to prevent him from speaking, indicating that the young man would ruin everything. Just as the votes were about to be called, Charles broke from the Major, jumped over the seats, and mounted to the pulpit. Then, in his own words, he "chained down the attention of a numerous audience for upwards of three-quarters of an hour." His speech was a success, and the temper of the house was changed. Indeed, everyone he met shook his hand and congratulated him, and he was publicly thanked and asked to preserve his thoughts in print because "it was a pity that they should be lost after making such an impression."

William Samuel Johnson resigned his seat as Senator from Connecticut when the new government moved from New York to Philadelphia, but he stayed on in the presidency of Columbia until July 2, 1800, when he resigned believing that he would not recover from a protracted illness. In this he was wrong, for he recovered, even remarried in December 1800; he outlived Charles, who died at the age of forty in September 1806, cutting short a successful career in business and law.

The greatness of William Samuel Johnson has faded from our collective memory; there are no published collections of his speeches; the power of his oratory is lost in the silence of the past. Johnson is not well remembered today for a variety of reasons, the chief being that he was not a leader during the revolution, but a conservative, a man who favored the rule of constitutional law and negotiated compromise to conflict; it was for this reason that he refused to serve in the First Continental Congress and withdrew from public life shortly thereafter during the Revolutionary War. That he was considered for the presidency of the University of Pennsylvania in late 1779 and was called upon to represent Connecticut at the Court of Arbitration in the Susquehanna hearings are signs of the great esteem in which his contemporaries held him,

an admiration which ultimately led to service in the Second Continental Congress, the Constitutional Convention, and the United States Senate despite his position during the Revolution. Johnson has left a legacy that has endured; when Johnson spoke, others listened. It was Johnson and his colleagues from Connecticut who proposed the "Great Compromise," a compromise which may have saved the Constitutional Convention from failure two hundred years ago.

Printing in the Medieval Islamic Underworld

RICHARD W. BULLIET

I n 1894 the Orientalist Josef Karabacek discovered several Arabic amulets printed on paper in the Archduke Rainer Collection of medieval papyri in Vienna. Several years ago I identified a similar printed amulet in the David Eugene Smith Collection in the Rare Book and Manuscript Library. During the intervening ninety-or-so years a few additional printed amulets have turned up in various European and Egyptian libraries, as well as one tiny example on parchment at the University of Pennsylvania; but few specimens had been adequately published, and the scholarly literature on medieval Arabic printing amounted to fewer than thirty pages. The scholars who had given their fleeting attention to the materials, Karabacek, Adolf Grohmann, and Giorgio Levi della Vida, have determined the following: Judging from paleography and the eighth-century date of the introduction of paper into the Islamic world, Arabic block printing must have begun in the ninth or tenth century; it apparently persisted into, but probably not beyond, the fourteenth century, disappearing even from memory by the beginning of the eighteenth century, when the first printing press was established in Istanbul; and no descriptions of, or even references to, printing were known in any medieval Islamic texts.

As for the extant specimens of medieval Arabic printing, most were amulets, that is, long, thin strips of paper bearing quotations from the Koran, lists of the names of God, and other religious texts designed to ward off evil or bring good luck. They were intended to be rolled and enclosed in metal cylinders worn on chains around the neck. The Columbia specimen fits this description. Although provenance was sometimes unclear, it was assumed that all specimens came from Egypt, for some were excavated there and others were found in papyrus collections.

This slender base of knowledge may now be increased on the basis of the apparent references to amulet printing I have found in two medieval Arabic poems devoted to the slang of the Banu Sasan, the informal Islamic fraternity of beggars, street performers, and



Banu Sasan trickster addressing the governor of Rahba; from a thirteenth-century Arab miniature painting in the collection of the Bibliothèque Nationale.

tricksters. The first reference is contained in the works of Abu Dulaf al-Khazraji, poet and vagabond, who frequented the courts of the tenth-century Iranian Buyid princes and who wrote two travel accounts, one totally bogus, the other replete with unlikely details. His poem on the Banu Sasan contains the line, "Among us, without publicity or boasting, is the engraver of *tarsh*." Abu Dulaf

comments on this line, saying, "The engraver of *tarsh* is he who engraves molds for amulets. People who are illiterate and cannot write buy them from him. The seller keeps back the design which is on it so that he exhausts his supply of amulets on the common people and makes them believe that he wrote them. The mold is called the *tarsh*." (All translations are mine. C. E. Bosworth, who edited and translated the poems in question in his book *The Medieval Islamic Underworld*, understands the lines differently and draws no connection to the extant printed amulets.)

Safi ad-Din al-Hilli is the other poet in whose work can be found a reference to amulet printing. He was an Arab from Hilla in Iraq who died around 1349. His poetry earned him favor at the courts of the Artuqid princes of northern Iraq and the Mamluk sultans of Cairo. More religious and more of a scholar than Abu Dulaf, his verse on *tarsh* is completely independent in content: "How many times has my hand written, by *tarsh* of tin, Syriac followed by the language of phylacteries." Interlinear glosses of a later date paraphrase the underworld jargon phrase "by *tarsh*" with "the striking of the mold like writing."

The verses of Abu Dulaf and Safi ad-Din, assuming they do refer to the extant printed amulets, confirm the tenth-to-fourteenth-century span of time during which Arabic blockprints were known, and they expand its geographical range as far as Iran. More important, they hint at the reason behind the remarkable lack of influence this potentially revolutionary technology had on Islamic society. If printing was invented by members of a vagabond underworld and used to trick gullible illiterates into buying amulets in the belief that they were efficacious because they had been handwritten by a holy man, the technology may have been beneath the notice of the scribes and scholars who shaped the high literate culture of the day. Only someone who was a vagabond himself, like Abu Dulaf, would know about such things; his poem simply reflects the medieval vogue for telling stories about impious tricksters and learning their curious jargon.

Safi ad-Din's verse, however, raises a possibility that has never before been considered in discussion of medieval blockprinting. It is normally assumed that the blocks used were of wood, but Safi ad-Din's verse has the word tin. Could some of the amulets, contrary to contemporary Chinese practice, have been printed from metal plates? The Columbia specimen, among others, suggests that they may. It contains 107 lines of writing, thirty-seven on one block and seventy on another, on a single strip of paper 2 by 11 $\frac{3}{8}$ inches in size, with Koranic verses in more ornamental calligraphy printed from a third block on a separate piece of paper, measuring 2 by 5 $\frac{3}{8}$ inches, glued to the top of the longer strip. The writing on both strips is in somewhat crude Kufic Arabic; the script and the use of circles to mark the end of passages suggest a possible tenth-century date.

The shorter strip of paper at the top has the writing left white and the background printed black. It appears to be a woodcut, since white-on-black writing is comparatively easy to render in wood, while the writing becomes illegible when the craftsman tries to leave small black letters in relief inside the teardrop shape at the top. The text is Sura 2, verse 256, of the Koran: "God, there is no god but He, the Living, the Everlasting. Slumber seizes him not, neither sleep; to Him belongs all that is in the heavens and the earth. Who is there that shall intercede with Him save by His leave? He knows what lies before them and what is after them, and they comprehend not anything of His knowledge save such as He wills. His Throne comprises the heavens and earth; the preserving of them oppresses Him not; He is the All-high, the All-glorious." (Arberry translation) This verse repeats in lines 11–16 of the text on the longer strip.

Opposite: The Columbia amulet is not only one of the rarest specimens of early printing, but lends support to the theory that medieval Muslims invented a method of printing from tin plates; the top left portion was printed from a woodblock.

The two blocks printed on the longer strip are quite different. Their 107 lines are squeezed eleven to twelve lines to the inch, and the thickness of the lines making up each of the thousands of letters is consistently one to two hundredths of an inch. The darker ink at the right edge of the upper text and the ink smudges at the top and bottom of both texts clearly indicate that they were printed from blocks. Since the right edge of the lower text is not heavily inked, the two blocks would seem to have been pressed on the paper separately. Given the difficulty of deciphering the minute characters, which lack the dots used on thirteen Arabic consonants to distinguish them from similarly shaped letters, the lower text is still unread.

The upper text, however, begins with the *fatiba*, the first Sura of the Koran, which forms part of every Muslim's daily prayers. Then lines 6 through 10 contain the last three Suras, 114, 113, and 112:

Say: "I take refuge with the Lord of men, the King of men, the God of men, from the evil of the slinking whisperer who whispers in the breasts of men, of jinn and men."

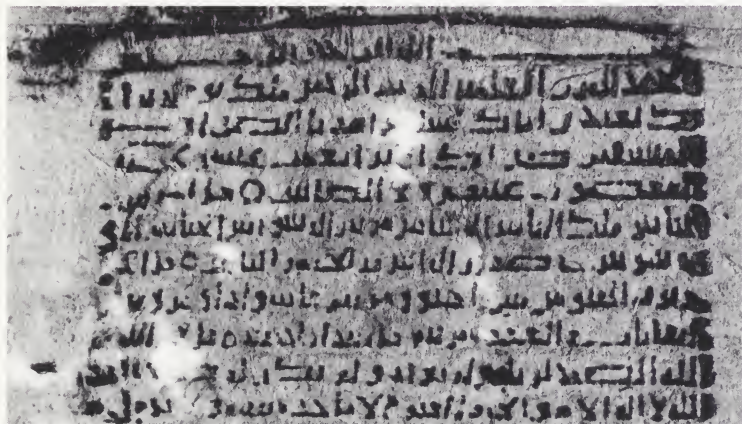
Say: "I take refuge with the Lord of the Daybreak from the evil of what He has created from the evil of darkness when it gathers, from the evil of the women who blow on knots, from the evil of an envier when he envies."

Say: "He is God, One, God, the Everlasting Refuge, who has not begotten, and has not been begotten, and equal to Him is not any one."

The text continues with Sura 2, verse 256, quoted above, and quotations from Sura 41, verse 41; Sura 4, verse 164, somewhat altered; Sura 3, verse 16; Sura 10, verse 81; and Sura 7, verse 116, on line 26. The penultimate three lines, 34–36, repeat verse 113:4–5; the intervening lines are undeciphered.

Since Arabic amulet texts are seldom of great import and tend to repeat the same formulae, a complete reading of the text would probably not yield important new information. What is important about the two texts on the longer strip is not their message but the

size of the script. Given the unlikelihood of a sophisticated etching press being known in the tenth century, the letters on the print-block must have been in relief. Hence, a woodcutter would have to have been a consummate master of his craft to have cut around



The upper text, apparently printed from a tin plate, begins with the first Sura of the Koran.

them so precisely with so few errors. The circles ending the Koranic passages would have been a particular challenge, but even under high magnification one cannot discern in them any straight lines made by a woodcutter's knife. Indeed, the illegibility of the black-on-white letters in the teardrop design at the top of the shorter strip, which are so much clumsier than the much smaller letters on the longer strip, strongly supports the proposition that the former was printed from a woodblock and the latter from a metal plate. Specimens in other collections confirm these indications that the lower part of the Columbia amulet was printed from a metal plate, as suggested by Safi ad-Din's verse. The likely procedure would have been for the amulet-maker to inscribe a text with a stylus in a clay tablet and then harden the tablet by baking. Molten tin would have been poured on this mold to produce a


plate with the letters reversed and in relief, ready to be inked and pressed on soft, absorbent papers.

The Columbia amulet, therefore, is not only one of the rarest of specimens of early printing, but its tiny writing lends support to the idea that the medieval Muslims invented a method of printing from tin plates. However, two questions remain: Where did the technology come from? And why did it disappear? As to the first, metal plates must have been an independent Muslim invention. The basic idea of printing possibly came from China, as previous scholars have argued; but if so, it is hard to explain why it should have caught on only with the Islamic underworld. As to the second, one can only hazard the guess that the explosive rise in popularity of the Islamic Sufi brotherhoods in the fourteenth century caused the amulet peddlers of the Banu Sasan to disappear. The ubiquitous Sufi shaikhs, who traded on their saintliness by writing amulets by hand, may not have tolerated their competition.

It is tempting, of course, given the disappearance of Islamic printing in the same century that saw the beginning of woodblock printing in Europe, to speculate on the possible Middle Eastern origins of European printing, but the Columbia specimen can tell us nothing about this; it remains for future scholarship to confirm one way or the other.

Justice Holmes's Advice to a Law Student

J. D. S. ARMSTRONG

 On March 1, 1899, Associate Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes of the Supreme Judicial Court of Massachusetts wrote a letter from the Court House in Boston to one P. E. Mason, Esq., in Carthage, Illinois. At that time Holmes had already published his landmark treatise, *The Common Law*, which alone would have immortalized him in legal circles. He was five months away from becoming Chief Justice of Massachusetts and three and a half years from appointment to the Supreme Court of the United States.

Whoever Mr. Mason may have been, he left no trace behind in the standard annals of organized activity. We can infer from Holmes's letter, the recent gift of Stuart Schimmel to the Rare Book and Manuscript Library, that in 1899 P. E. Mason was about to embark on the study of law, that he had written Holmes a letter asking his advice on how best to go about it, and that the letter's tone had pleased the great man and moved him to respond in considerable detail.

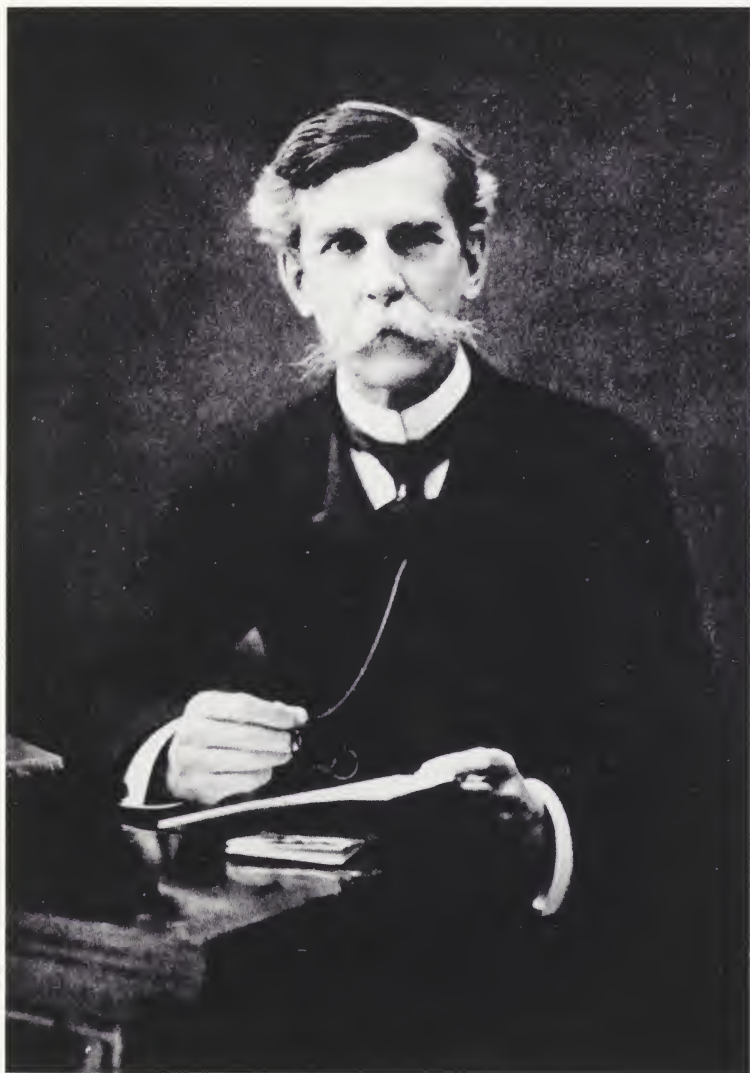
Holmes's own legal education had commenced with three terms at Harvard Law School. Although his studies there failed to convince him that his real calling was the law rather than philosophy, he graduated in 1866 and was admitted to practice in Boston the following year. The next fifteen years were to constitute the real legal education of Holmes as he combined intensive private study, editorship of the *American Law Review*, and lecturing at Harvard with an active practice. The fruit of his labors, *The Common Law*, was published in 1881 before he turned forty. A professorship at Harvard ensued, followed rapidly by his appointment to the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court.

Although he never returned to the formal teaching of law, Holmes was an informed and interested critic of legal education. While his own education at Harvard Law School had taken place under the old regime of traditional law study, his short tenure on the Harvard faculty coincided with the very height of Langdell's case method revolution, a revolution with which his convictions put him in much sympathy. Holmes's interest in and knowledge of the options in legal education informed his reply to Mason, which includes both general exhortations regarding the proper approach to the field and a list of specific books to read.

Holmes's primary advice to Mason recalls his most famous aphorism, from *The Common Law*, that "the life of the law has not been logic: it has been experience." "Don't forget actualities," he wrote to Mason, "Law is a practical thing. The first thing you want to aim at is to make it a practical weapon in your hands—not to begin by inventing a new jurisprudence or any of the fancy topics which amuse and delight the incompetent."

This emphasis on studying the law in the context of its concrete applications extends to Holmes's design of a reading list for the young law student that he considered an improvement over his own student reading. He advises Mason, "I should begin with books nearest to everyday life and common modes of thought. I think this a labor-saving truth—but it is directly contrary to what I used to hear. Blackstone, a very puzzling book to a beginner, in our days was thought necessary just as two generations before when Blackstone was new and illuminating, Coke and Littleton were recommended by true conservatives."

Holmes himself had devoted many years to producing the twelfth edition (1873) of the monumental *Kent's Commentaries*. This work, originally written in 1826 by former Columbia law professor James Kent, was a systematic survey of earlier American law along the lines of *Blackstone's Commentaries*, the survey of even earlier English law mentioned in the excerpt above. Yet despite having updated *Kent* to his own liking, Holmes steered Mason away



Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr., in 1899 at the time he became Chief Justice of Massachusetts.

from comprehensive surveys altogether, preferring to select for him a list of specific books on the various basic legal subjects.

At the top of the list is Anson's book on Contract. William Reynell Anson (1843–1914), barrister at the Inner Temple and Fellow (later Warden) of All Souls College, Oxford, published his *Principles of the English Law of Contract* in 1879 with the stated aim of delineating for students “the general principles which govern the contractual relation from its beginning to its end.” In this endeavor he was phenomenally successful: the 1984 *Biographical Dictionary of the Common Law* avers that Anson's book on Contract “largely shaped the modern law itself,” and that it “did much to dispel the long-prevalent notion that English law could not be taught, but only learned through rigorous apprenticeship.” Because of the dominance of judicially developed common law in the area of contract, Anson's *Principles* was able to cap its success in England with many years of recognition as a standard textbook in the United States, England's sister repository of the common law. The singular success of Anson's treatise outlived its author, as English editions continued to appear from the Clarendon Press, with, of course, an increasing proportion of non-Ansonian prose. The current editor, A. G. Guest of Gray's Inn and the University of London, produced a twenty-sixth edition in 1984 and further editions are anticipated.

As a supplement to Anson on Contract, Holmes recommended Pollock's treatise on the same subject. Sir Frederick Pollock (1845–1937), barrister of Lincoln's Inn, fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge, professor of jurisprudence at Oxford, judge of the Admiralty Court of Cinque Ports, and close friend of Holmes, published his *Principles of Contract at Law and in Equity* over the imprint of Stevens and Sons in London in 1876. Pollock was particularly interested in exploring the relationship between the jurisprudence of contracts in common law and in equity, and in attempting to fill in the gaps resulting from the earlier division of the judicial system into two sets of courts. Pollock's book, though different in concept and orientation from Anson's, also enjoyed a

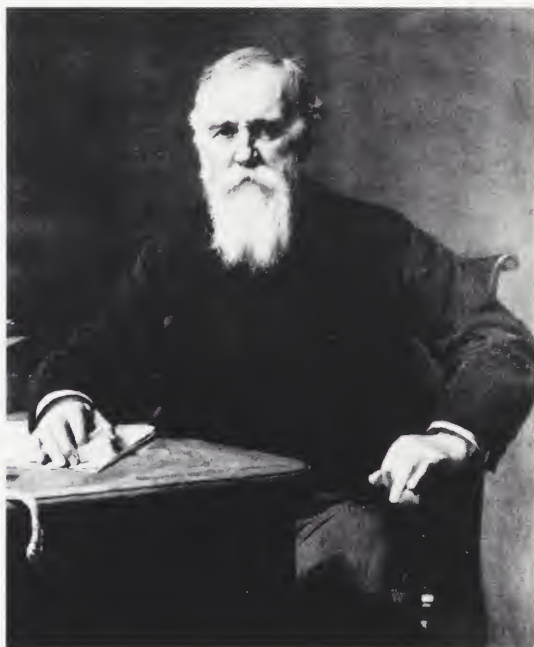
thoroughgoing success. Pollock completed the tenth edition in 1936, the year before he died. As with Anson, posthumous revisions followed, the twelfth English edition appearing in 1946 under the editorship of P. H. Winfield.

With Holmes's third recommendation to Mason, that he obtain Langdell's *Cases on Contract*, he introduces into his list a towering landmark in legal education. The most famous contribution of Christopher Columbus Langdell (1826–1906) to the study of law was his invention and promotion of the case method of legal study; his casebook *A Selection of Cases on the Law of Contracts* was originally published in 1871 for the use of his students in their contract law class at Harvard. Rather than memorizing systems of legal principles and rules in the abstract, students instructed by the case method were obliged to extract the operative legal principles from a progression of actual cases collected in a casebook. The selection of the cases was obviously critical:

[T]he cases which are useful and necessary for this purpose bear an exceedingly small proportion to all that have been reported. The vast majority are useless, and worse than useless, for any purpose of systematic study. . . . It seemed to me, therefore, to be possible to take such a branch of the law as Contracts, for example, and, without exceeding comparatively moderate limits, to select, classify, and arrange all the cases which had contributed in any important degree to the growth, development, or establishment of any of its essential doctrines; and that such a work could not fail to be of material service to all who desire to study that branch of law systematically and in its original sources.

Despite a string of progeny extending directly from Langdell's original casebook down through the succeeding eighty-odd years, the influence of this work could hardly be measured in terms of succeeding editions alone. Indeed, it would be difficult to overstate the influence of Langdell's *Cases on Contract* on American legal education and hence on legal practice and jurisprudence. While the case method was initially transplanted to other academic American law schools by personal disciples of Langdell, earliest and most

notably by William Keener's move to Columbia University in 1890, it was the casebook that traveled most widely and provided a model for a method of instruction that virtually took over the leading law schools of the country.



This portrait of Christopher Columbus Langdell, whose case method of study caused a revolution in legal education, hangs in the Langdell Reading Room of Harvard Law School.

The case method sought to distance the study of law from the old apprenticeships served at the side of practicing lawyers, and to elevate the position of the university law school in legal education. In its scientific aspirations it reflects the positivist method prominent in all scholarly disciplines in Langdell's era. But while Langdell's "scientific" approach responded opportunely to the new demands put on law and lawyers in an industrializing America, it

destined the case method for criticism and rejection in the full measure eventually suffered by positivist movements in general. Not least of the criticisms which can be leveled at Langdell's science of law approach is that it failed to be scientific. Not all of the data underlying the development of legal doctrine can safely be assumed to reside in the judicial opinions that are the bread and butter of the case law method. Nor can the selection of significant cases from the irrelevant mass be freed from subjectivity. Modifications to Langdell's conceptual approach resulted in changes in the casebook format he had developed. Despite the modifications to his system, however, Langdell is generally regarded as the father of today's university-based legal education.

For the study of torts, Holmes suggested "Bigelow's little book, Student's series." Melville M. Bigelow's *Elements of the Law of Torts* (1878) was the first in the Students' Series of law books put out by Little, Brown of Boston. Bigelow's book is the only one on Mason's list in which Holmes's direct influence may be readily discerned. Bigelow had preceded his treatise with a casebook on Torts in 1875 for which he adapted for his own purposes the arrangement of the law set forth in Holmes's article "The Theory of Torts" in the *American Law Review* for July 1873.

By the eighth edition (1907), however, Bigelow found the world so changed that a rethinking of the book and its arrangement was in order:

A new point of view has made its appearance out of the agitation of social movements, within the half dozen years since the last edition of this book was in hand. The struggle between equality and inequality—between the public and privilege, and between privilege as capital and privilege as labor—had not at that time proceeded far enough or long enough to make its meaning, much less the outcome, clear. . . . Since then the curtain has lifted somewhat and the social movement has found its place in the courts; though it is still uncertain whether equality or privilege will succeed in the end in making itself the will of the State. . . . [P]recedent is relaxing its hold under the pressure of the newer social energy. . . . The decisions of the past. . . are not wrong, they are past. . . . [T]hat law

must be regarded as the resultant of conflicting social forces (less the conservatism of courts and legislature)—a point of view long hidden from sight in the faint stages of a social era of equality—is reflected on many pages of this book as it now appears.

This new way of looking at the law led him, he claimed, to abandon the earlier, Holmes-inspired arrangement of the book. The radicalism and profound social upheavals of the age, therefore, evidently had as one of their lesser fruits the transposition of the negligence section of Melville Bigelow's treatise from the back of the book to a position between deceit and slander of title.

For a Torts casebook Holmes looked to Langdell's chief disciple, James Barr Ames (1846–1910), another member of the Harvard Law faculty, who became its dean in 1895. In 1874, the year after Ames graduated from Harvard Law School and became associate professor of law there, the Harvard Law Review Publishing Company published his *Select Cases on Torts*, to which Jeremiah Smith added a second volume in 1893. The last edition appeared in 1929.

For the law of real property Holmes had another textbook of monumental stature to suggest. Joshua Williams (1813–1881), barrister of Lincoln's Inn, had first published his *Principles of the Law of Real Property, Intended as a First Book for the Use of Students in Conveyancing* in 1845. The treatise enjoyed remarkable success in England and America, in the latter through American editions edited by William Henry Rawle and published by T. and J. W. Johnson of Philadelphia. The thirteenth edition (1880) was the last prepared by the author before his death.

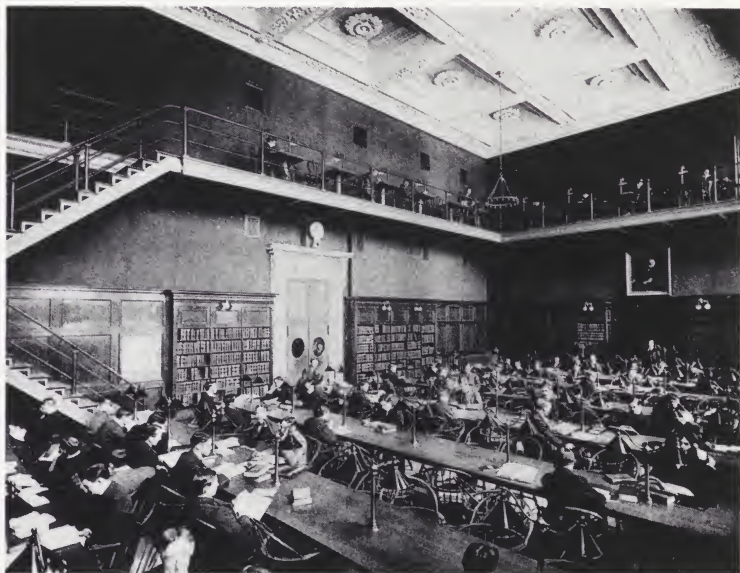
In suggesting in his letter that Mason read Williams's treatise, Holmes cautioned that he might want to reconsider this recommendation, "as the later editions probably have a good deal of late English statute law which would be a bother." As Joshua and later his son Cyprian Williams assiduously incorporated each newly passed British statute into the text of their book, the latter proportionally declined in appeal as an American textbook. Indeed, the changes wrought by the many new English statutes required extensive changes even to the English edition. After striving through

three editions to retain his father's work more or less intact, Cyprian Williams bowed to necessity in 1892 and essentially rewrote the work for its seventeenth edition. Gone was the pithy and melodious prose that had stood in print for almost fifty years, as in the line from the first page that had pointed out, "No man, be he ever so feloniously disposed, can run away with an acre of land." In exchange for his sacrifice of much of the original text, Cyprian Williams obtained the continuing success in England of the treatise bearing his father's name for over forty more years. But as the 1886 Philadelphia edition had posited, the utility for Americans of a treatise so dominated by English statute was problematic: after 1894 no further American editions appeared.

Holmes was somewhat vague on the Pleading book he wished to recommend, but the treatise to which he refers would appear to be the 1898 edition of Henry John Stephen's *Treatise on the Principles of Pleading in Civil Actions*, prepared by Samuel Tyler, professor in the law department of Columbian College in Washington, D.C., on the basis of an early London edition. Stephen on *Pleading*, first published in 1824, was a standard English text renowned for its clear explanation of the principles underlying the extremely complex rules of English common law pleading, i.e., of framing a case for formally correct presentation to the judge or jury. Tyler's preface is noteworthy for its impassioned defense of common law pleading against barbarian innovations such as New York's code pleading, a landmark reform in civil procedure which Tyler considered ill-advised.

Holmes had assembled quite a varied list of books to recommend to Mason. To be sure, the books shared certain characteristics. Of the nine, only one (*Williams on Real Property*) had been published by the time of Holmes's own student days, although all of the rest had been on the market during his brief teaching career or in the immediately preceding years. The stature of *Williams on Real Property* was obviously well assured by the time Holmes selected it for Mason, and of the others all save Bigelow's treatise and Ames's cases on Pleading went on to enjoy persistent demand long after

1899; but the books differed from each other in type, with Anson, Pollock, Williams, and Tyler's *Stephen* representing the older textbook format of the systematic treatise of doctrine, and Langdell,



The Columbia Law School Reading Room in Low Memorial Library as it appeared at the turn of the century while William A. Keener was Dean.

Bigelow, and Ames offering the new-model casebook, a difference which ostensibly reflected underlying theoretical differences. Subsequent analysis and evaluation may have revealed Langdell's doctrinal departure to have been superficial and unoriginal; but, at the time Mason sought guidance, the world of legal education was in turmoil over this apparent conflict.

In some respects Holmes's list and advice would seem very familiar to any student beginning the study of law today, almost ninety years after the letter to P. E. Mason. The subjects for which Holmes specified books—Contracts, Torts, Real Property, and

Pleading (now taught as Civil Procedure)— as well as Criminal Law and Evidence, for which he deemed no particular recommendation to be necessary, are those familiar to every first-year law student of the 1980s. Moreover, his suggestion that Mason borrow the treatises but *purchase* the casebooks has been adopted as policy by law schools around the country.

Where the list seems completely foreign, other than by virtue of the inevitable eclipsing of the Langdell ascendancy by newer, brighter theories of jurisprudence, is in its high proportion of English-origin books, and indeed in their inclusion at all. That Holmes's list represented the end of an era in Anglo-American legal textbook publishing is clearly suggested by the decline in the American fortunes of *Williams on Real Property*. While the divergence of English statutory law no doubt accounts in large part for the trend away from transatlantic law treatises, the seed may also have been rooted in the development of a Langdellian-inspired culture of legal education which was uniquely American and which sought its clarification from its own pioneers rather than from the jurists of old England.

While Holmes himself never wrote any textbooks for law students, his selection of books for Mason as well as his famous utterances on the importance of a practical perspective on the legal doctrine suggest his warm sympathy for the reformers at work in legal education in his day. In his advice to the young law student from Illinois, Holmes looks back on his own youthful formation, and his words reflect the realization that, after a hesitant start, his legal vocation had indeed caught up with him:

All the pleasure of life is in general ideas. But all the use of life is in specific solutions—which cannot be reached through generalities any more than a picture can be painted by knowing some rules of method. They are reached by insight, tact and specific knowledge. If you have fire enough in your belly you will give the high romantic turn to your work—but you will not do it so as to count unless you know the school of the soldier as well as the least aspiring private with whom you may be called on to fight.

Our Growing Collections

KENNETH A. LOHF

Alaya gift. The papers of the historian, archivist, and social activist Henry Joseph Browne have been presented by his widow, Ms. Flavia Alaya. At one time a Roman Catholic priest, Browne taught at a number of colleges and universities, including Rutgers University, was active in community affairs in New York and in Paterson, New Jersey, and did extensive research on a life of John Hughes, first archbishop of New York. The papers received as a gift from Ms. Alaya comprise correspondence, manuscripts, photographs, and printed materials relating to his research on Hughes, and files documenting his work with the New York City Council against Poverty, the Catholic Committee on Urban Ministry, the Priests' Senate, the Stryckers Bay Housing Development, and numerous other organizations. Among the historical materials relating to Archbishop Hughes are letters from numerous nineteenth-century religious leaders and political figures, including Popes Leo XII and Pius IX, Abraham Lincoln, William Henry Seward, and Thurlow Weed; Browne's own correspondence files include letters from Cardinals Spellman and Cooke, Robert F. Kennedy, John V. Lindsay, George Meany, Philip Murray, and William F. Ryan.

Bleibtreu Foundation gift. The Jacob Bleibtreu Foundation, Inc., has presented a collection of eight Thornton Wilder letters written by the playwright and novelist to his friends Jacob and Helen Bleibtreu. Dated from 1955 to 1967, the letters contain comments on the playwright's lectures, travels, and reading, as well as on the writing and publishing of *The Eighth Day* and on seeing for the first time "Hello, Dolly!" the musical based on his *The Matchmaker*. The Bleibtreus' son, John, has added to the Foundation's gift the two final letters received by his parents from Wilder; dated November and December 1973, they relate to Wilder's health and his recently published book *Theophilus North*.

Braslow gift. Mr. Dean G. Braslow (LL.B., 1961) has donated, for inclusion in the Historical Collection of Children's Literature, a group of sixty-one volumes published in the "Better Little Books" series issued by the Whitman Publishing Company in the 1940s. Included are familiar stories about childhood heroes and heroines, such as Little Orphan Annie, Buck Rogers, Tarzan, The Shadow, Bambi, Mickey Mouse, and Flash Gordon, among numerous others.

Chase gift. Mrs. Frances Walker Chase has presented, for addition to the papers of her husband, the late Professor Richard Volney Chase (Ph.D., 1946), a group of 172 letters which he received from his colleagues and friends in the literary world. Dated from 1948 to 1971, there are significant series of letters from Lionel Trilling, Robert W. Flint, Irving Howe, Frederick W. Dupee, and Robert Penn Warren, as well as single letters from Newton Arvin, R. P. Blackmur, Elizabeth Hardwick, Dwight Macdonald, John Crowe Ransom, and Allen Tate, among numerous other writers and editors.

Coudert bequest. The papers of Frederic R. Coudert, Jr., have been received by bequest from his widow, Paula Murray Coudert. Numbering some 2,500 letters, manuscripts, and scrapbooks of clippings, the papers relate primarily to Coudert's law practice, his political campaigns, and his work as a New York State Senator, 1939-1946, and as a member of the U.S. House of Representatives from the 17th District of Manhattan, 80th to the 85th U.S. Congresses, 1947-1958; there is also an extensive file of papers pertaining to his important work on the New York Legislative Committee to Investigate the Education System, known as the Rapp-Coudert Committee. The correspondence files include letters from Jacob K. Javits, Henry Cabot Lodge, Richard M. Nixon, and Nelson A. Rockefeller.

Dzierbicki gift. In memory of Marguerite A. Cohn, Mr. Ronald L. Dzierbicki has presented a group of rare twentieth-century literary

editions, of which the following inscribed books are particularly notable: E. E. Cummings, *One Times One*, London, 1947, inscribed by the publisher, Cyril Connolly; Rhys Davies, *The Song of Songs and Other Stories*, London, 1927, inscribed to Paul Selver; Norman



“Ce ne sont plus des femmes, ce sont des ballons”; original lithograph by Honoré Daumier from the series *Actualités*.
(Harley gift)

Mailer, *The Deer Park*, New York, 1955, and *The Naked and the Dead*, New York, 1948, both inscribed warmly to a friend; Beatrice Webb, *My Apprenticeship*, London, 1926, inscribed to the author's sister, Rosalind Heyworth Dobbs; and W. B. Yeats, *Plays in Prose and Verse*, London, 1926, inscribed to Raymond Marriott. There are also first editions of Hubert Crackanthorpe's *Sentimental Studies and a Set of Village Tales*, New York, 1895, and Sinclair Lewis's *Gideon Planish*, New York, 1943, as well as David Garnett's copy of Henry James's *The Two Magics*, London, 1898.

Harley gift. Mr. Robert L. Harley (Class of '26) has presented a number of important and attractive graphic works: a hand-colored exemplar of the French version of John Mitchell's influential map of the British and French Dominions in North America, *Amérique Septentrionale*, engraved in Paris in 1777, and issued in eight folio sheets which when placed together measure some 55 inches by 83 inches; and nine mid-nineteenth-century lithographs by Honoré Daumier, including fine examples from several of the caricaturist's series, *Actualités*, *Les Baigneurs*, *Croquis d'Été*, *Croquis Parisiens*, and *Les Divorceuses*.

Higginbotham gift. Mr. Hal Ford Higginbotham and Mrs. Barbra Buckner Higginbotham (M.S. in L.S., 1969) have presented funds for the purchase of the 1497 Cologne edition of Aristotle's *Libri Politicorum* in memory of David Thompson (A.M., 1973; M.S. in L.S., 1978), who completed graduate work in the Classics Department and who served on the staff of the Libraries from 1975 to 1981. Printed by Heinrich Quentell and containing seven woodcut devices, the text is the Latin version and includes Johannes Versor's commentary. The Higginbothams' memorial gift adds an important edition to the Incunabula Collection, and has the added distinction of being the only recorded copy in America.

Jones gift. Mr. and Mrs. Dan Burne Jones have donated more than two hundred first editions of works written by and about Robert Frost, Walt Whitman, Ernest Hemingway, James Jones, and Peter Freuchen, and illustrated by Lynd Ward and Rockwell Kent. The gift also includes limited signed editions by Simone de Beauvoir, Kathleen Winsor, Sinclair Lewis, and Aaron Bohrod. Especially notable are Rockwell Kent's autobiography, *It's Me, O Lord*, New York, 1955, inscribed to the collectors, and Kent's edition of *The Canterbury Tales of Geoffrey Chaucer*, New York, 1930, one of seventy-five copies bound in full leather and signed by the illustrator.



Inscribed photograph of Gertrude Lawrence by Hal Phyfe, 1930.
(Palmer gift)

Palmer gift. Mr. Paul R. Palmer (M.S., 1950; A.M., 1955) has presented a collection of 165 signed or inscribed photographs of film stars from the silent screen era to the 1970s, including fine portraits of Heather Angel, Vilma Banky, Binnie Barnes, Madge Bellamy, Tom Brown, Mrs. Patrick Campbell, Eddie Cantor, Ruth

Chatterton, Katharine Cornell, Dolores Costello, Louise Dresser, Dorothy and Lillian Gish, Miriam Hopkins, Gertrude Lawrence, Ben Lyon, and Colleen Moore, among numerous other actors and actresses. The group also includes signed photographs of several notable dramatists and literary figures, among them Edward Albee, Cecil Beaton, Günter Grass, William Inge, and Rudyard Kipling. Mr. Palmer also donated 334 printed editions of works in the fields of literature and the performing arts, ranging in date from 1918 to the 1980s.

Pratt gift. Dr. Dallas Pratt (M.D., 1941) has presented a set of nine original photographs of Rupert Brooke from the renowned series taken in London in 1913 by the American photographer Sherril Schell. For the sitting, Brooke wore a blue shirt and necktie of the same color, “a long piece of silk wide enough for a muffler, tied like the ordinary four-in-hand”; Schell further noted that the poet had an extraordinary candor in his glance and his presence suggested vitality, qualities that are still apparent to the present-day viewer. The twelfth and last of Schell’s photographs, present in Dr. Pratt’s gift, became the most familiar, showing the poet’s face in profile and with his neck and shoulders bare; it was published as the frontispiece to *1914 & Other Poems*, was used on the memorial plaque to Brooke in Rugby Chapel, and provided the poet’s legend with a visual image that met the needs of a nation at a time of crisis.

Ray gift. Shortly before his death last December Mr. Gordon N. Ray (LL.D., 1969) made a substantial addition to the collection of autographs that he had developed over the years. Numbering 108 autograph letters and six manuscripts, the gift is especially notable for: the autograph letter written by the seventeenth-century English clergyman Jeremy Taylor to his ecclesiastical superior, The Bishop of Down, August 9, 1661, dealing largely with church matters and written in Taylor’s elegant and engaging style; and a series of five letters written by Rockwell Kent to Albert and Charles Boni from 1928 to 1930, concerning Kent’s publishing ventures

with Boni and his unavailing efforts to have the firm publish a manuscript about Eskimo life by Kent's friend Knud Rasmussen. The remainder of Mr. Ray's gift comprises a large file of letters and manuscripts from nineteenth-century poets, novelists, and other



Rupert Brooke photographed by Sherril Schell, 1913. (Pratt gift)

writers, including Sir Edwin Arnold, Alfred Austin, Sir Walter Besant, Hall Caine, Thomas Campbell, Eliza Cook, Marie Corelli, D. M. Craik, Sir Edmund Gosse, Mary Howitt, Jean Ingelow, Jerome K. Jerome, Charles Lever, Captain Marryat, Tom Moore, Samuel Rogers, Tom Taylor, Martin Tupper, and Charlotte M. Yonge.

Rothkopf gift. Two important works pertaining to Robert Frost have been presented by Mrs. Carol Z. Rothkopf (A.M., 1952): Lawrance Thompson's monumental biography of the poet, published in three volumes from 1966 to 1976, inscribed by the biographer to Marguerite Cohn; and the poet's *Selected Letters*, published in 1964 and edited by Thompson, with a card from the publisher and editor presenting the volume to Mrs. Cohn laid in.

Roudiez gift. To the collection of his papers, Professor Leon S. Roudiez (A.M., 1940; Ph.D., 1950) has recently added the original typescript and holograph manuscript, corrected throughout, for his book *French Fiction Today*, published in 1972 by Rutgers University Press. Professor Roudiez has also donated five first editions by Robert André, Claude Aveline, and Alfred Kern, inscribed by the authors to him and the late Justin O'Brien.

Schang gift. Mr. Frederick C. Schang (B.Litt., 1915) has donated, for addition to the collection of visiting cards that he has established in the Rare Book and Manuscript Library, the very rare visiting card of President James Madison, signed by the President for a Mr. James Lewis.

Schimmel gift. Mr. Stuart B. Schimmel has presented a group of thirty-three lithographs, manuscript items, and other graphic works, among which the following may be singled out for special mention: a leaf from a thirteenth-century French Bible; America's earliest income tax form, issued in 1866; a printed and manuscript document, dated July 14, 1735, appointing Thomas Stow and Henry Chapman as assessors for the Parish of Farnborough in England; two leaves from Arthur Szyk's Passover *Haggadah*, printed on vellum; a lithographic portrait of Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr., by M. Hyman, 1939, signed by Holmes; and twenty-four lithographs of alphabets and specimens of texts by the English calligrapher David Kindersley, each one of fifty signed copies, dated from 1968 to 1971.



Signed lithograph by English calligrapher David Kindersley, January 1968. (Schimmel gift)

Schniewind gift. Mrs. Edith Low Bush Schniewind has presented a collection of papers and memorabilia relating to her great-great-grandfather, Daniel D. Tompkins (A.B., 1795), Governor of New York, 1807–1816, member of the New York Constitutional Convention of 1801, and Vice President of the United States under

James Monroe, 1817–1825. Included among the gift items are a letter from Tompkins to the Reverend Peter I. Van Pelt concerning the creation of a college on Staten Island, a contemporary manuscript copy of Tompkins's Columbia College valedictory address, various manuscript and printed biographical and genealogical items, and photographs of five portraits of Tompkins and his wife.

Sykes gift. A second installment of the papers of the novelist and critic Gerald Sykes has been received from Mrs. Claire Sykes. Included among the forty-three manuscripts are typescripts of notes and drafts relating to the author's first novel, *The Nice American*, as well as manuscripts for various other works of fiction.

Thompson gift. Professor Susan O. Thompson (M.S., 1963; D.L.S., 1972) and her husband, Professor John A. Thompson (A.M., 1947; Ph.D., 1957), have donated a collection of twenty-four editions of African poetry published in Nigeria; issued primarily during the 1960s, the pamphlets, many of which are illustrated, include the work of such prominent poets as Ulli Beier, Dennis Brutus, John Pepper Clark, Christopher Okigbo, Jean-Joseph Rabearivelo, and Felix Tchikaya U'Tamsi. Mrs. Thompson has also added to the Book Arts Collection more than a hundred pieces of printing ephemera, including pamphlets issued, illustrated, or designed by John De Pol, Gravesend Press, Ray Nash, Stanbrook Abbey Press, Stinehour Press, Reynolds Stone, and Walpole Press.

Yerushalmi gift. Professor Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi (A.M., 1961; Ph.D., 1966) has presented a rare seventeenth-century edition of the *Babylonian Talmud*. Published in Amsterdam by Immanuel Benveniste in 1644–1649, the set, complete in twelve volumes, contains the uncensored text with the commentaries of Rashi and the Tosafists, Rabbi Asher, Rabbi Nissim, Shimshon of Sens, and the commentary of the Rambam on the Mishna. The work is handsomely printed with woodcut printer's devices and floriated initials on individual tractate titles.

Activities of the Friends

Winter Reception. The Libraries' large collection of Rockwell Kent drawings formed the basis of the winter exhibition, "Designs for Living: The Decorative Arts of Rockwell Kent," which was opened with a reception sponsored by the Friends on Thursday afternoon, March 5. The more than one hundred drawings and paintings exhibited were drawn from gifts received over the years from Dr. Corliss Lamont, Mr. Dan Burne Jones, Mr. George M. Jaffin, Mrs. Iphigene Sulzberger, Mr. and Mrs. Alfred C. Berol, Mrs. Sally Kent Gorton, Mr. and Mrs. Herman Cohen, and Mr. and Mrs. George Spector. This first exhibition devoted to Kent's designs for the home, commercial advertising, and decorations for public buildings also includes pieces of dinnerware, fabrics with Kent's designs, wrapping paper, and other decorative objects, many of them specially lent for the exhibition, which will remain on view through July 31.

Bancroft Awards Dinner. Presided over by Elizabeth M. Cain, Chairman of the Friends, the annual Bancroft Awards Dinner was held in the Rotunda of Low Memorial Library on Thursday evening, April 2. President Michael I. Sovern announced the winners of the 1987 awards for distinguished books in American history and diplomacy published in 1986: Thomas M. Doerflinger, *A Vigorous Spirit of Enterprise: Merchants and Economic Development in Revolutionary Philadelphia*, University of North Carolina Press; and Roger Lane, *Roots of Violence in Black Philadelphia, 1860-1900*, Harvard University Press. The President presented to the author of each book an award of \$4,000 from funds provided by the Edgar A. and Frederic Bancroft Foundation, and the Chairman of the Friends presented certificates to the publishers of the award-winning books.

Future Meetings. An exhibition of treasures from the library of Alan H. Kempner, presented by Mrs. Margaret L. Kempner, will open with a reception on Wednesday afternoon, December 2. The winter exhibition reception has been scheduled for March 2, 1988, and the Bancroft Awards dinner will be held on Wednesday evening, April 6, 1988.

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